

REMARKS

Claims 12 – 16, 20, 26, and 29 have been cancelled. Claims 17 and 27 have been amended. Claims 17 – 19, 21 – 25, 27, 28, 30, and 31 are currently pending in the present application.

The drawings are objected to. Also, in the Office Action, claim 12 is objected to. In the Office Action, claims 12, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Stettner et al EP 0 299 213. Also, in the Office Action, claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stettner et al EP 0 299 213. Furthermore, in the Office Action, claims 16, 25-27, 30, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stettner et al EP 0 299 213 in view of Meyerhoefer US Patent No. 2,779,432. Additionally, in the Office Action, claims 12, 13, 17, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishimura JP4-256715 in view of Stettner et al EP 0 299 213. Moreover, in the Office Action, claims 14 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishimura JP4-256715 in view of Stettner et al EP 0 299 213 in view of Kelly US Patent No. 5,946,768. Further additionally, in the Office Action, claims 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishimura JP4-256715 in view of Stettner et al EP 0 299 213 in view of Meyerhoefer US Patent No. 2,779,432. Also, in the Office Action, claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishimura JP4-256715 in view of Stettner et al EP 0 299 213 and Meyerhoefer US Patent No. 2,779,432 and further in view of Kelly US Patent No. 5,946,768.

With respect to the objection to the drawings, it is submitted that this objection is now overcome in view of the cancellation of claim 26.

With respect to the objection to claim 12, it is submitted that this objection is now moot in view of the cancellation of claim 12.

With respect to the prior art rejections of claims, favorable reconsideration

is respectfully requested in view of the amendment of claims 17 and 27 and the following comments.

The present invention, as exemplarily set forth in claim 17 as currently amended of the present application, is directed to a vacuum cleaner. As recited in claim 17 as currently amended of the present application, the inventive vacuum cleaner includes a housing defining an internal cavity, and a lid connected to the housing for providing access to the internal cavity. The lid is movable between an open condition in which the internal cavity is open, and a closed condition, in which the internal cavity is closed and the lid includes an opening and a closure part for closing the opening. As further recited in claim 17 as currently amended of the present application, the opening is adjacent to the accessory chamber and provides access to the accessory chamber when the lid is in the closed condition while the seal between the wall and the lid is maintained. Furthermore, a respective portion of the lid borders the opening, this respective portion of the lid defines a lid opening border surface, and the closure part includes a retractable blind attached to the lid that is slidable with respect to the lid along a slide track to open and close the opening. As additionally recited in claim 17 as currently amended of the present application the retractable blind is configured such that the respective portion of the retractable blind that extends along the slide track does not project outwardly beyond the lid opening border surface. The inventive vacuum cleaner set forth in claim 17 as currently amended of the present application also includes a wall connected to the housing and defining a dust chamber within the internal cavity, the wall having an edge facing the lid, a dust separator disposed within the dust chamber for retaining dust, an accessory chamber disposed within the internal cavity and the wall separating the accessory chamber from the dust chamber, and a seal member forming a dust-tight seal between the wall and the lid when the lid is in the closed condition that prevents dust from passing from the dust chamber into the accessory chamber.

Stettner et al EP 0 299 213 discloses a vacuum cleaner having a receiving space (10) for the receipt therein of vacuum accessories (14, 15).

Kelly US Patent No. 5,946,768 discloses a mobile vacuuming workstation 50 operational on a directed surface such as a floor 7. A housing interior of the mobile vacuuming workstation 50 may be accessed by hinged doors, sliding partitions or a flexible roll door. FIG. 1 shows a roll door 95 positioned within an opening in housing back wall 5. The door is segmented by hinged lateral slats 89. Opposing edge portions of the slats slidably engage slots 91 extending along each opposing vertical edge 88 of the housing door opening. Horizontal slat guides 93 are located along opposing inner sidewall surfaces of the housing to accommodate the door when in an elevated position as shown in FIG. 1. To facilitate movement, the roll down door is provided with an outwardly extending door handle 96.

As will be explained in greater detail hereinafter, it is respectfully submitted that none of the cited prior art would provide any motivation to one of skill in the art to combine the respective arrangements of these cited references, let alone to selectively combine the respective arrangements of these two references in a manner to yield a vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 17 as currently amended of the present application. For example, Stettner et al EP 0 299 213 discloses a vacuum cleaner having a receiving space (10) that is closed by the entire dust compartment lid (the embodiment of Figure 1 of Stettner et al EP 0 299 213) and a vacuum cleaner having a receiving space (10) formed by a cassette (26) that is removable from a compartment and that has a covering wall (27) that covers a grip opening of the receiving space (10) (the embodiment of Figure 2 of Stettner et al EP 0 299 213). In contrast, Kelly US Patent No. 5,946,768 discloses a mobile vacuuming workstation 50 configured as an upright cart rollable on wheels. In view of the different structures of the Stettner et al EP 0 299 213 and the Kelly US Patent No. 5,946,768 arrangements, and particularly in view of their contrasting vacuum cleaner housing configurations, it can clearly

be appreciated that neither one of these cited references provides any motivation to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the vacuum cleaner arrangements of either of these references. Moreover, even if these cited references provided some motivation to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the filter arrangements of one of these references, which Appellant submits there is not, it is clear that neither reference provides any guidance as to how such a modification could be effected. Moreover, it is even clearer that neither reference provides any guidance as to how one of ordinary skill in the art should modify the respective arrangements of these two references so as to produce the vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 17 as currently amended of the present application.

Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 17 as currently amended of the present application patentably defines over the prior art of record and is allowable. Additionally, it is submitted that claims 18, 19, and 21 – 25, which each ultimately depends from claim 17, are allowable for at least the reasons that claim 17 is allowable. Moreover, it is submitted that claim 27 as currently amended of the present application, and claims 30 and 31 depending ultimately therefrom, patentably define over the prior art of record and are allowable.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of claims 17 – 19, 21 – 25, 27, 28, 30, and 31 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,



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